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GLORYING  
IN  
TRIBULATION:

A BRIEF MEMOIR OF HANNAH CARSON,

FOR THIRTEEN YEARS DEPRIVED OF THE  
USE OF ALL HER LIMBS.

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"I can say, I feel resigned to *ease* or *pain*,  
because I know in whose hands I am."

HANNAH CARSON.

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PHILADELPHIA:  
PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL BOOK SOCIETY,  
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## P R E F A C E.

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IN an age like the present, when books without number are published, even of a professedly religious character, it was not without some hesitancy that the accompanying little volume was issued.

But the remarkably clear perception of gospel truth, especially the grand fundamental doctrine of *Justification by Faith*, as exhibited in the character of this departed Christian, induced the belief that a brief memoir would be both acceptable and instructive.

In the case of Hannah Carson, we have ample evidence of the power of Divine Grace to sustain the child of God under the severest and sharpest trials.

This enabled her to believe that He in whose hands she thus wholly committed herself, was doing all things well.

It must be borne in mind, that her bodily affliction extended through a series of seventeen years, and increased rather than diminished, and if we add to this, her total deprivation of the means of obtaining a livelihood, we cannot fail to perceive how greatly her faith was tried in matters both temporal and spiritual.

How strikingly she realized the fulfilment of God's promises, will appear in the following pages, and with the hope that her example may strengthen the faith of all believers, especially the afflicted, her memoir is submitted to the public.

PHILADELPHIA, May 12, 1864.

## GLORYING IN TRIBULATION.

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HANNAH TRANKS was born of respectable colored parentage, in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, April 1st, 1808. But few particulars of her early life can now be gathered; we learn, however, that her parents belonged to the Methodist Church, and, like many other devoted followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, she was indebted to a pious mother for her first serious impressions.

She was early taught the duty and privilege of prayer, as well as the attentive perusal of the sacred Scriptures, and the good seed thus sown in childhood by maternal love, in God's own appointed

time, developed those Christian graces for which she afterwards became so justly distinguished. The Sunday-school in her native town also lent its aid in this holy work, as she was a regular attendant upon its services.

At the age of eighteen, Providence deprived her of her excellent mother, and confided to her the care of six younger sisters whom she conscientiously endeavored to train in the paths of virtue. Her disposition at this period was mild and retiring, caring little for company, and wholly devoted to the responsibilities devolving upon her.

In 1835 she was married to a respectable man of her color, named Robert Carson. As already stated, she had been piously instructed, but had not yet experienced that change of heart which is wrought by the application of the

cleansing blood of a dying Saviour. She, however, attended divine service in the colored Bethel church in Sixth Street, below Pine, in this city, and, during a revival, was awakened to a sense of her lost condition by nature.

For a while she was reluctant to acknowledge the claims of the gospel, but, to use her own language, — “I saw so many pressing forward, I’ll press forward too.” But a barrier of no ordinary nature now presented itself. Her husband was violently opposed to her making a profession of religion, and thwarted her in every possible manner; his language became rude and boisterous, and his manners harsh and overbearing.

Already, however, she had heard that brief but imperative command, “Follow me,” and she dared not disobey. Her mind was decided, and, shortly after-

wards, she was received into full membership with the above-named church, and so continued the rest of her life. The change, immediately following this step, was so marked as to leave no doubt whatever of her thorough conversion, and it was not long before her husband had abundant reason to thank her for so doing.

No sooner had she experienced the joy and peace in believing, than she remembered another emphatic declaration, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." The first whom she approached with the glad tidings of salvation, was the husband, who had done all in his power to prevent her from receiving them herself. But she saw his danger, and lost no time in urging him to make

his calling and election sure. To this end, she not only read to him the Word of God, but prayed *with* him and *for* him. Nor did she labor in vain; the heavenly seed took root, and the names of both husband and wife were written with the blood of Jesus on the pages of the Book of Life.

Two years and a half later, in March 1841, her husband died; his end was happy and triumphant. She was now left a widow, with one son, (two children having previously died in infancy,) and thrown upon her own exertions for her maintenance. Her promptness, obliging disposition, and pleasing manners soon procured kind friends, who employed her in house cleaning, whitewashing, and other similar duties. Nor was she ever at a loss for employment. Those who engaged

her one season, always sought her for another, and thus she was enabled to support herself and child quite comfortably. In this manner six years passed quietly away, unmarked by any stirring incident, and, as far as human eye could discern, she bid fair to pass the rest of her life in this manner, but Providence ordered otherwise.

Thus far we fail to discover anything remarkable in her history. Her case was similar to that of thousands around her. Childhood, youth, married life,—her conversion and widowhood, pass before us. But another phase now gradually appears, presenting her in a totally different light, increasing in wonder and interest as seventeen long years of the most intense bodily suffering bear her



slowly along, each in their turn developing some hidden Christian grace and virtue, and fully realizing the assertion of the holy Scripture, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

Had Hannah Carson been permitted at this period to draw aside the curtain of futurity, and see herself totally deprived of the use of *all* her limbs, and consequently the means of obtaining a livelihood,—entirely dependent upon the bounty of kind friends, whom the Lord so remarkably provided,—to know her inability even to raise her hands to wipe away the tears that so often trickled down her wasted cheeks,—to be placed in any position, whether in bed or out of it, without being able to change it,—to suffer also from a complication of diseases,—to see her old friends, once vigorous and robust, precede her to the grave,—

she might well query, "How long, O Lord!" and "How can these things be?"

But our answer is to be found in her favorite texts, the truth of which she had abundantly proved in her own wonderful experience, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" and, "My times are in thy hand!"

In the spring of 1847, she had been cleaning the cellar of a house in this city, and, on returning home in the evening, complained of a pain and stiffness in one of the joints of her right thumb, which gradually extended along the arm to the shoulder. She paid little attention to it, thinking it was merely the effect of an ordinary cold, and pursued her labors as usual. Instead of diminishing, however, her complaint increased, crossing the chest, and investing both the *left* arm and shoulder. It proved to be *acute in-*

*flammatory rheumatism*, for which various remedies were applied, without producing any permanent relief. Her joints gradually became completely stiffened, and by degrees she was compelled to forego her accustomed occupations, confining herself almost entirely within doors.

About two years were spent in this crippled condition. We have said that both her arms and chest were affected; her body was the next to suffer; then her lower limbs were attacked. She could now only make her way along by using crutches. When tired of sitting, her sister would stand her in a corner, her back supported by the walls, and her frame by crutches. But so helpless did she become, that she was unable to change even this position without assistance; finally, she lost *entirely* the power of locomotion, and became confined to her

bed. It must not be supposed that her disease 'spread itself over her system within a short period. On the contrary, it was fully *four* years from the time she was taken, until reduced to entire helplessness. Our narrative is now brought down to 1851, and it is from this date to her death,—a period of thirteen years, to which we would call particular attention. Her life of *faith*, which so strongly marked her subsequent career, now begins to be developed.

One of her most valued friends says,—“I first knew Hannah Carson ten years ago, and from the impressions *then* received, up to my last visit, not long before her death, I can trace a wonderful *growth* in grace — through many trials, patience had its perfect work at last. A striking incident came under my observation in the winter of

1855. I had arranged with a friend to visit her on a certain day, but other engagements led to a postponement of several days. Finally, we were successful, and found Hannah sitting, as usual, calm and placid, but noticed an unusual kindling in her bright eyes as we laid upon her table the various packages from our well filled baskets, and gave into her hands the money intrusted to our care by some of her thoughtful friends. Still, she thanked us very quietly, and said only that it was a kind Lord who put it into our kind hearts to come and see such a poor creature as she was. Calling the little girl who then waited on her, she told her to put on the mush to cook for their tea, and then come to her. She seemed strangely astonished at something, and was soon at her side again. ‘Now, Hannah, bring

the bag, and untie it in my lap.' The child drew out of a table drawer a long, narrow bag—her only purse—untied the string, and poured out the contents—the *half* of a half cent piece. 'There,' said Hannah, 'that is all I had, and I wanted you all to see how the Lord cares for his children. I drank my last tea this morning, and borrowed a little sugar from my sister to put in it. My last coal is on the stove, and the meal that is boiling there for mush is the only food I have left. But I knew the Lord would not forsake me. I knew he would send some one; and last night I dreamed I saw you coming. But the child couldn't have faith as I had, and so she said this morning,—‘Well, Aunt Hannah, if the Lord doesn't send some one pretty quick, *we'll all starve.*' And now, my child, you see what the Lord has sent us.' ”

On another occasion, shortly after she became entirely helpless, her faith was tried in a similar manner. It was in winter, and she had a little boy to wait upon her. He could do but little, however, for the simple reason that there was nothing to do with,—she had neither food or money: they both became greatly exhausted, and her young attendant asked repeatedly, but vainly, for nourishment. Hannah replied, “My child, the Lord will send it.” A day and night passed over without the needed relief; at length, a knock was heard at the door, and a member of the Society of Friends entered, and said he had felt an impression on his mind that he must come, and hand her a sum of money. Thus she was again provided for.

In 1858 she removed from her residence in Bush Row, Kensington, to

Ivy Street, near Tenth and Lombard, where she remained until her death. She was brought thither in a furniture car, sitting in her chair, an object of charity and pity, but withal possessing faith. This change was beneficial in every respect. Her room, though small, was airy, comfortable, and cheerful; the street quiet and orderly; and from this time her friends increased, who never failed to provide for all her wants. Under these genial influences, aided primarily by Divine grace, her character became more and more beautifully developed. To use the language of one of her friends,—“Her mind seemed to expand with the soul. There was a growing refinement of manners, a nice sense of social proprieties, and her conversation grew richer in thought and even in expression.”

Her abode now became the resort of



nearly all evangelical denominations, always welcomed, who beheld, with astonishment, an unlearned mulatto woman discoursing on Divine things with a spirituality and unction that the pulpit well might emulate.

They saw her suffering from a disease that affected *all* her limbs, entirely suspending their functions, and often producing the most excruciating pain, but failing to cause a murmur or repining thought. They saw her sustained by a faith regarding *temporal* matters, which taught her to look for, and receive her daily bread by Providences almost as direct as when Elijah was fed by ravens, — and by a faith regarding *spiritual* matters, which enabled her to declare that, after the closest scrutiny, she saw naught but love inscribed upon her heaviest crosses and darkest dispensa-

tions. They saw one who had thoroughly learned that most difficult lesson in the believer's discipline, — total, entire submission to the will of God in every particular; and to deem it her highest privilege to lay the lowest at His feet, and there serve Him in protracted suffering.

Her room was kept scrupulously neat and clean, and struck every visitor with its appearance. There was no shabby furniture, no ragged carpet, no carelessly-made bed,—nothing out of place. If in bed when any one came to see her, she would request her attendant, a little colored girl, to raise her by means of a girth fastened round her waist, and by which she was elevated to a sitting posture; her limbs were then slowly drawn around, until they reached the floor; her back was then propped with pillows, and her arms stretched out, resting on

her lap, the palms inwardly. When questioned about the immovable position of her hands, her common reply was,—*“I have not seen the palms of my hands for several years!”* When inclined to read, a book was placed under her hands in order to keep down the pages; these, however, she could not turn, and was obliged to receive assistance. In warm weather, the flies troubled her exceedingly, but she was unable to brush them away; this, too, had to be done by another. When from any cause, her tears flowed, *she* was unable to resist their progress; *this* devolved upon other hands than her own. From the time her arms became perfectly stiffened to her dying day, — thirteen long years, — she had to be fed like a little child. Yet, in all these trying, wearisome, painful positions, she generally greeted her friends

with a sweet, pensive smile, that seemed to borrow its radiance from the face of the Saviour she so dearly loved, and whose spirit had been so abundantly bestowed upon her.

All who visited her, even the most experienced Christians, could testify how greatly her example of patient suffering had benefitted them, and many found a congeniality of thought and feeling little expected from one occupying her humble position. She thus expressed herself to one of her most intimate friends :—

“I would like to tell thee\*,” said she, “how it seems to me.” (This was in reference to praying one for another.) “Some people might laugh at me, but I

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\* In conversing with any member of the Society of Friends, she always used the singular number.

think thee will understand me. I seem to see a *list* of friends come close to me,—oh! close enough to read without spectacles. And the letters are like printed letters in a book; sometimes in silver and sometimes in gold—and I see the names one after another—and as I read each one, I pray—‘Oh, Lord, bless this dear friend,’ and so on.”

The question was then asked, “What is the difference between the letters of silver and gold?”

“Well,” she answered, “when they are in gold I can seem to ask a great deal more.”

“Do the names come always in the same order?”

“No—but I notice one thing;—my oldest friends, like thee and dear Miss Anna N\*\*\*\*\*, that used to come so

far to see me, are always near the *top* of the list. And it seems to me sometimes in this way, when I pray, as if the Lord put a blank check in my hand, *already signed*, and told me I might fill it up with anything I wished."

Whilst receiving a visit from some Christian friends, who had engaged in solemn prayer, she said, "while you have been with me, the love of Christ has kindled like a fire in all my bones, and has driven out all the pain and anguish, *till I am full of joy.*"

Aside from her bodily infirmities, she had much to try her in the conduct of those on whom she depended for help in domestic matters. During her long sickness, she employed several half-grown colored girls, one of whom particularly took an almost fiendish pleasure in tor-

menting her. She would laugh at her helpless situation, flatly refuse to perform her work, use the most violent personal language, and even refuse to give her mistress the food that a kind charity so often placed on her table. Others, again, were inefficient and lazy, and took no interest whatever in her condition.

She often rebuked them before visitors for their conduct, and sometimes with more severity than the circumstance required. As her *general* demeanor was so gentle and subdued, her reproofs seemed occasionally to fall upon the ear with a harshness and quickness that surprised those who heard them. Whilst she was a remarkable instance of the sanctifying power of the grace of God, she had, nevertheless, her failings, and the one just alluded to, we believe, was

the most prominent. This, however, was only a passing cloud, and shows the weakness of our nature, even when most highly favored.

To a visitor who remarked that she had never lacked any needful thing since she became helpless, she replied :

“How could I, with so rich a Father! I am *astonished* to see how He sometimes sends me little things I have been thinking of, when I don't really *need* them.”

She was very fond of ice-creams and other delicacies, but was not known to ask for them. Often, when brought to her, she would say, “This is just what I want, and the Lord has sent it.” Generally, in regard to the necessities of life, it was only by repeated inquiries, that her friends could ascertain her wants. She choose rather to await, than solicit them.



On one occasion, her supply of coal gave out, and she was compelled to purchase *three cents'* worth. In this strait, the tempter plied her with doubts and fears for a season, and whilst conversing with a lady at her bedside about her former experience, how that she had always been provided for in ways often the least expected, a cart stopped at her door, and left her a generous quantity.

To one who had several times replenished her scanty stock of tea, sugar, &c., she exclaimed, "You have been sent by the Lord, for I was out of these things, and have been praying for them this very day."

One kind friend sent her Sunday dinner regularly for several years. She was peculiarly grateful for this kindness. To use her own words,—“I have no trouble

in having it prepared, and so the quiet of the Sabbath is not disturbed."

In this manner, her temporal wants were supplied during all the long period of her helplessness. Well might she say, as she did to a visitor—"I can testify that the Lord has verified *all* His promises."

When in difficulties of any kind, she invariably had recourse to prayer, in which her faith was very strong, and deliverance was always granted.

One night when very much oppressed in consequence of her room being filled with smoke from the stove, she prayed fervently for relief, being, of course, utterly unable to help herself. Her prayer was answered by her brother coming down into the room, and rendering the needed assistance. He had risen for the

day, thinking it was much later than it really was.

If any one is inclined to cavil at these incidents, or think her conduct hypocritical, let such remember her entirely helpless condition, which prevented her making any personal exertion, however greatly disposed she might have been.

Her total resignation to the will of God was a marked feature in her character, particularly after becoming entirely helpless.

She once remarked, "When I was *first* taken, and was obliged to use crutches, I thought it a heavy trial; and now, nearly all my teeth are gone, save three or four, but I'm thankful I have even these, and can bear my helplessness better *now* than when I was able to go about on crutches. No human being knows how I suffer; God Almighty alone

knows." It was in the same spirit, when allusion was made to the inability to use her limbs, that she said, "*I am thankful I can move my eyes.*"

To an intimate friend she said, "Sometimes I waken in the night, and long to be turned over, and feel as if I could not be another moment in that position; perhaps my throat is dry and parched at the same time; I call and call, but the little girl sleeps heavy and don't hear me. Well, I just put up a prayer to Jesus, and He takes away all the parching thirst, and I don't want to be turned over."

In the warm, summer months, her patience was tried to the utmost. The heat greatly enervated her, and as she was unable leave her room, she was denied a change of air. Besides this, the flies and mosquitoes annoyed her unmolested, unless dispersed by her attendant,

who was often occupied with other duties; and to add still to her pains and discomforts, *her hip bones had worked through*, making her condition wretched in the extreme. Yet in this crucible, the work of refining went bravely on, consuming the dross, and developing the gold in which the image of her Divine Master appeared brighter and brighter every day. She could say, with Madame Guyon—

“A little bird I am,  
 Shut from the fields of air;  
 And in my cage I sit and sing  
 To Him who placed me there;  
 Well pleased a prisoner to be,  
 Because, my God, it pleases Thee.

“O! it is good to soar  
 These bolts and bars above,  
 To Him whose purposes I adore—  
 Whose Providence I love;  
 And in Thy mighty will to find,  
 The joy and freedom of the mind.”

It was in this spirit that she once said —“Some people say they are contented ; but they want something more. As for *me*, I can say I am *satisfied*, satisfied, satisfied in my very bones.”

Although called to suffer to an almost incredible extent, she was remarkably emphatic in her declarations that she attached no merit whatever to her sufferings, or to any thing pertaining to herself. Alone on Jesus Christ and Him crucified, she rested her hopes of salvation. The declarations of holy Scripture, as well as the experience of her own heart, had long ago convinced her of her lost and helpless state, and the need of a Saviour, through whose cleansing blood she could obtain pardon. With her, Christ was all in all—the author as well as the finisher of her faith. Her own testimony on this glorious and all-

important theme, is sufficiently conclusive. It comes too, with peculiar force, as it was delivered only eight days before her death;—a summing up, as it were, of her own rich, deep, spiritual experience, sown in tears and anguish, and reaped in joy :

“I was thinking yesterday that I have everything to hope for, and nothing to fear. Not this world, nor ten thousand worlds, would I exchange for my hope in Christ. I envy no soul living. I feel quite satisfied with what God has bestowed upon me. God is my witness that this is true. He has done so much for me—more than I will be able to tell—in different ways; remarkable answers to prayer. He knew before ever I asked. He knew *what* I would ask; and *when* I asked, He was ready to answer my weak requests. I was thinking just now

how could any one expect to see God WITHOUT CHRIST.

“ Oh ! I often feel as if I could only open my arms and gather in all the world to the feet of Jesus, and tell them what He has done for us ! His goodness and mercy ; so long forbearing. Sometimes I feel *young* in my happiness. It is not (of) myself—it’s all of grace, a free gift. I feel that I have enough to do in thanking God for the many friends He has raised up for me. Oh ! what a precious Saviour ! He could have taken me away long since ; but he chooses to keep me here ; it’s all right ; whatever He does is all right. I can say, I feel resigned to *ease* or *pain*, because I know in whose hands I am. Sometimes when I am in pain and distress, I can pour out my complaints to God, and talk to Him, and He will change my mind, as none



but God can, from the things of earth to Heaven, and make me forget this poor body, and thus the *hours* slip by."

Like many others chosen in the furnace of affliction, her spiritual elevations bore a corresponding ratio to her physical depressions. Her mind was drawn out in the contemplation of Divine things, lifted above those of time and sense, and hovering, as it were, like a captive bird, eager for its upward flight. "I long to go," said she, "NOT to escape pain, suffering, or sorrow, but to enjoy the presence of my Saviour."

She was frequently unable to lie in bed during the night, and her only resort was a sitting posture. The room was totally darkened, as her scanty funds did not allow the use of candles; yet this was no hardship. In a silence so profound that—to use her own words—

she could “hear a pin drop,” and shut in from all mortal vision, she became “almost rapturous with Heaven in view.”

When enabled to sleep, she was sometimes awakened by the striking of a very loud clock on her mantel. “But,”—we quote her own language,—“I sleep very little; then, again, I don’t hear it for *hours*, and I wonder if it has stopped. I have such communion with my Saviour,—I am so happy,—I forget my poor suffering body altogether.”

A friend asked, “What particular thought is the happy one, on such occasions?”

“Oh, my prospects, my prospects! \* ”

\* It was in a similar frame of mind that the sainted Payson wrote to his sister, only a few weeks before his death :

“Were I,” he says, “to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter

Oh, the nights are too short, too short ! and I have to pray for patience when daytime comes !”

Her longings for departure became so intense, that she was obliged to pray for submission to patiently wait God’s own time. This was particularly the case when once taken very ill, and she herself apprehended her end was near. On being assured that she was recovering, she felt much disappointed, but soon became resigned to a longer probation.

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from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears but as an insignificant rill, that may be crossed at a single step, whenever God shall give permission.” (See MEMOIR, p. 462.)

Whilst disease had completely wrecked her system, her mind, nevertheless, continued fresh and vigorous. From that Great unfailing Well of water, she was continually refreshed. Its waters were sweet to her taste, and health to her soul. This is confirmed by her own language,—

“Every morning I have plenty to do ; plenty of new work ; new thoughts about Heaven. I have a happy thought one day, and the next day it widens out ; every day I have fresh prospects, fresh hopes, fresh views of Heaven. No matter how afflicted I am ; no ability to eat or sleep ; still I have this peace, this comfort, that seems to subdue my bodily affliction all to silence. If every hair on my head were a tongue, I would employ them all in praising Almighty God.”

Another marked characteristic was

her firm attachment and veneration for the Word of God. With spectacles on, and the Bible in her lap, kept open by the weight of her crippled hands, she would read and read, whilst her young attendant beside her slowly turned its sacred pages. When visited by those with whom she was intimately acquainted, they could perform no greater favor than comply with her request, modestly spoken, "Will you read me a chapter?"

In speaking of her sufferings to one who had been reading to her, she said, "Had it not been for that blessed volume you hold in your hands, I should have given out long ago; but all I have to do when I feel so (badly), is to turn to its promises, and I feel comfortable. When I read these, or when some one steps in, and reads for me, I feel relieved of a great burden."

We now approach a subject which many would deem visionary, and others again almost disbelieve. There is no reason, however, to doubt its authenticity; indeed, its parallel can occasionally be found in the biographies of those who, like Hannah Carson, have attained a high degree in spiritual exercises and perceptions.

To those who are thus highly favored, it is eminently suggestive. It conveys a gracious sense of their acceptance and communion with God, and frequently an intimation that their earthly pilgrimage is nearly ended, just as the traveller, when, towards the close of a lengthened voyage, begins to experience balmy and odoriferous breezes, he knows that land is near, though not yet visible.

We refer to an occasion when she seemed transported as it were, to the

presence of her Saviour, and “saw no man save Jesus only.” This occurred about thirteen months before her death, and may be best stated in her own words:

“I had such a vision. It would not be proper for me to describe the person of my Saviour as I then saw Him: so awfully grand and majestic; His eye filled the whole earth. I saw, I saw—I cannot tell any one *what* I saw, but it was a glimpse of His glory. Whilst in this state, I felt that *my* work and mission was to serve and glorify God in patient suffering.\* I reviewed my past

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\* She was much impressed with a visit from the Rev. Mr. B., an Episcopal clergyman of this city. On hearing her narrative of this “vision,” in which she particularly alluded to her mission of glorifying God in suffering, he replied: “I do not doubt it. That is your mission; and here, shut out from the world, and shut in with God,

life, and saw how he had led me through many, many years of suffering, and how in all my troubles He had ever cherished and protected me; how when wanting some little delicacy, it came, almost at the time I desired it. Oh! how all this

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you are much nearer Heaven, than any of us; your Heaven has begun. It reminds me of an image in the sculptor's hand—it is partly finished, and so far beautiful, but not quite completed. We know the artist will never leave his work, till he has given the last touch. So the Lord will never leave His work in you; and after a few more touches, He will pronounce it finished,—a little more of the discipline of suffering, and then the gates will open, and you will enter right in."

He then closed with fervent prayer. After his departure, says one who accompanied him, there was such a holy feeling, that Hannah did not allow the deep silence to be broken for some time.



humbled me. I felt so little and so small.”\* She spoke these words with

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\* It is recorded of that holy man, the Rev. John Flavel, that when on a journey, during his meditations, he had such ravishing tastes of heavenly joy, and such full assurance of his interest therein, that he utterly lost sight and sense of this world, and all its concerns, so that he knew not where he was. At last, perceiving himself faint, through a great loss of blood from his nose, he alighted from his horse near a spring, where he washed and refreshed himself, earnestly desiring, that if it were the will of God, he might there leave the world. His strength reviving, he resumed his journey. He passed that night without any sleep, the joy of the Lord still overflowing him, so that he seemed an inhabitant of the other world.

The Rev. William Tennent was similarly favored, and to so great an extent, that he was obliged fervently to pray, that God would withdraw Himself from him, or he would perish under a view of His ineffable glory.

much feeling and earnestness, as if conscious in whose presence she seemed to have been, and then, in allusion to her severe suffering, closed by saying, "I have a heavy cross to bear, *but God bears the heaviest end.*"

When speaking of this incident, particularly in regard to temporal matters, she said that not many days before she was so remarkably favored, she longed for some home-made bread, but *had none*. She did not wait long, however, for a few hours afterward, *one of her friends kindly brought a supply.*

For the welfare of her son she felt great solicitude, and her prayers, like incense of old, ascended day and night for his conversion."\* No longer beneath

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\* In her portrait, she is represented with her son's likeness in her lap. She wished it placed

the paternal roof, his absence in the army occasioned her much anxious thought and sorrow. Though piously instructed, he seemed little disposed to listen to her counsels. Still her faith was strong, and she believed that He, who in years long gone, had answered her prayers for the conversion of her husband, would, in His own good time, enable her boy to say, "I will arise, and go to my Father." In conversation upon this subject with one of her friends, in October, 1859, allusion was made to the faith and earnest prayers of Monica, the mother of Augustine, whose eventful career had just been read to her. On hearing the narrative, she exclaimed, "*Then surely there is hope for poor me.*"

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there, to use her own words, "because he was nearest her heart."

More than four years now passed away, and she yet saw no encouraging change in her son. "I have a work to do," said she, "in praying for him;" and it was, indeed, faithfully performed through a prolonged period of trial and suffering. At last, however, she became greatly encouraged, and thought the good work had commenced. His letters indicated a serious frame of mind, and spoke of her oft repeated prayers. Only eight days before her death she said :

"I am so encouraged about my son to-day. I have had a letter from him, in which it is evident he is wrought upon by the Lord in answer to prayer. I thought this morning as I sat here, that perhaps I have been left so long to see his heart turned to his Saviour before I die, I can hardly return thanks enough for his letter. Such a change from his

former way of writing! I felt so unworthy of His goodness, that He should thus favor *me*. His goodness! oh! His goodness to me. It is like an unbounded sea. From the crown of my head to the sole of my foot, I am not able to express it; no, never *here*. The *love* of God—the goodness of God. I feel at times such unspeakable *joy* that I could not *bear more* and live. I often realize that I could not feel more of the power of God than I have.”

If *these* were her feelings on beholding the first glimmer of hope in her son, what will they be when they meet in glory?

We have now traced the career of Hannah Carson through many, many years of excruciating suffering which experienced no abatement; in fact, it only increased towards her close, and the reader might naturally ask, Can she linger much

longer? Is not her race nearly finished? If, as she expressed it, she had "a work to do in praying for her son," it would seem from the preceding statements, that she had nearly fulfilled it, and could exclaim, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." As will be perceived, our narrative is brought down to the period of the arrival of her son's letter, about eight or ten days before her death; the few remaining pages will, therefore, be devoted to her closing hours.

On the 7th of March, 1864, her sufferings became intense, the pains increasing every hour, and she thought the day of deliverance had at last arrived. In fact, the week previous, she had a presentiment of her approaching end, and, calmly, gave directions relative to some mementoes for her friends.

As the day passed slowly by, she grew weaker and weaker. She survived the night, though it became evident to her sister, that in its silent hours she commenced her solemn journey through that dark valley whose terrors she had long since ceased to fear, and whose gloomy paths terminated in the light of Heaven's portals.

On the following morning she was much oppressed, and said to her sister, "Rachel, I do want one day of easier breathing before I go, that I may send for some of my friends, and give them a parting present." But Providence ordered otherwise. She grew worse, and said, "*The waters of Jordan are so still, so calm ; nothing to do, but step right over. Jesus couldn't be any nearer.*"

Her physician asked if she was in pain ?

“Yes,” she replied, “*one mass of pain.*”

She was asked what message she had for her absent, wandering son.

“Give him,” said she, “my last and dying love.”

As she approached “the waters,” she longed for “some valiant Christian to see her over,” but no one was present, and she wished greatly for an interview with one of her intimate friends, for whom her sister proposed sending; even here Patience had her perfect work, as she replied, “wait a little.” She now experienced one of those remarkable Providences,—like many others that occurred during her checkered career.—Hardly had the name of this person been mentioned, before a knock was heard at the door, and the one she so ardently desired to see, was at her bedside. This was at three o’clock, P.M.



“Oh!” she exclaimed, “I have been so anxious to see you, and here you are; *you have come in God’s appointed time.*”

Her friend had been sent with a little delicacy, and was totally ignorant of her situation, or that she even wished to see him.

She was stretched upon her bed, in an agony of pain, unable to move a limb, her eyes turned imploringly upward, and groaning deeply.

“Oh!” she said, “if I had to hunt a Saviour *now*, what would I do?”

“But,” her visitor replied, “he is very near you now, though you do not see him with the eye of flesh.”

“*Yes, very near me.*”

A portion of the forty-third chapter of Isaiah was then read, and particular allusion made to the second verse, — “When thou passest through the waters,

I will be with thee." Fervent prayer was also offered, in which she joined with much feeling. From these offices she derived much strength and comfort. When asked, if she was willing to depart, she replied,—

"Perfectly willing, yet Thy will be done; Thy will be done,"—repeating this last with great emphasis.

Her voice was still strong, and she continued, "And now good-bye, if we should not meet again. Go on with your work, go on with your work!"—(alluding to Christian labors.)

By this time her friend was obliged to leave, but promised to call again. Another visit was accordingly made at eight o'clock, and she was found in bed as before. Weak as she was, she earnestly requested her attendant to *raise her to a sitting posture*. She remained in this

position several minutes, but was rapidly sinking; her face was deathly pale, and her forehead suffused with perspiration. She seemed too far gone to enter into conversation without great effort, and it was deemed best to say nothing. Her friend rose to depart. "Good bye!" said she, "I feel very drowsy;" even then her eyes were closing. An hour and twenty minutes later, she requested to be turned on her side; this was no sooner done, than she passed away without a struggle, quietly as a child falling asleep on its mother's bosom. Thus she closed a pilgrimage of remarkable trial and suffering, on Tuesday, March 8, 1864, aged nearly fifty-six years.

Her funeral took place on the 11th instant. Her little room was crowded by her friends, both white and colored, who assembled to pay the last tribute

of respect to the memory of departed worth. Though differing in creed, they all rallied in the name of Him of whom it is declared, that, "in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." A minister of the Society of Friends opened the exercises with an exhortation, and also led in prayer; a layman of the Protestant Episcopal Church addressed the audience, and was followed by the pastor of the Methodist Bethel church. Wesley's fine hymn—

"And am I born to die  
To lay this body down,—"

was sung with much feeling, after which her remains were interred in Lebanon cemetery, to await the archangel's trump on the resurrection morn, to rise in immortal health and vigor, and join

that mighty throng, “who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

Comment upon the character of Hannah Carson seems almost needless. Her biography, whilst it speaks for itself, speaks tenfold more for that Saviour in whose blood she was washed, and in whom she alone trusted for salvation.—To those in affliction, whether allied to poverty or riches, it affords ample evidence of Christ’s power to lighten the heaviest cross, and cheer the darkest hour.

To those whose faith is weak in matters temporal and spiritual, who look upon the future with misgivings and dread, it bids them dispel their fears, and cast their cares upon Him, whose

unfailing Providence ordereth all things both in Heaven and earth.

To those who are in the enjoyment of health, and the full possession of their faculties, it urges them to appreciate these precious gifts, and consecrate them to the glory of God.

To the impenitent, it assures them that by nature, however excellent their moral qualities, they already stand condemned before God, as guilty sinners, and can only be saved by the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose spirit sanctifieth the heart, and whose "blood cleanseth from all sin."

THE END.

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